town and country church

MOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

MOLBROOK LIBRARY
PACIFIC SCHOOL
OF RELIGION

JULY-AUGUST, 1961
NO. 159

DEPARTMENT OF TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH · NCC

Purposes: To encourage cooperation among rural churches • to improve local church administration in organization, finance, education, community relations, and lay leadership training • to help develop a Christian philosophy of rural life embracing ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government

HENRY A. MCCANNA
Editor-in-Chief

WILLIAM A. CARHART
Managing Editor

BARBARA M. UNIKER
Asst. Managing Editor

GUY R. BELL
Copy Editor

Contents

IN THIS ISSUE 2

POEMS FOR SPIRITUAL REFRESHMENT 3
by Harold A. Schulz

GOOD ARCHITECTURE NEEDED . 4
by William S. Clark

CREATIVE BUILDING AND SHARING 5

RELIGION AND SAFETY MATERIALS 7

CREST 8

CATHOLIC-PROTESTANT COOPERATION 9
by Edward W. O'Rourke

THE LOVE OF GOD—BY MAIL . 10
by Allen W. Clark

THE CUBAN REFUGEE CRISIS . 13
by Elsa Kruuse

STEPPING UP PRODUCTION . . 15
by Benjamin H. Cain

SO YOU MAY KNOW 16

Cover

Cover photo shows conservation farming on a cooperating farm of the Catoctin Soil Conservation District of Maryland. The village in background is Jefferson, Md. Photo courtesy of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

In this issue . . .

• Portrayed on the cover is the new symbol of the Department of Town and Country Church. The form of this emblem identifies us as being concerned for the preservation of fundamental values, and with a thrust into the future which will claim it for Christ.

We think you will find in the poetry of Harold Schulz that unique quality of refreshment which is the true basic for spiritual stimulation.

As a matter of fact we have designed this issue to stir you deeply about many things.

The challenge for better church architecture issued by William Clark is fulfilled in the example of the Shenendehowa Methodist Church.

The Rev. Albert Atteberry suggests a very provocative and sobering answer to the question, "Why don't we have enough qualified ministers?"

For your convenience we have listed available materials on safety. Certainly the stewardship of human resources demands that we stress safety.

The National Catholic Rural Life Conference in performing a similar task to that of our own deserves our cooperation.

One of the most creative ministries ever to come to our attention is the "Home Prayers" service described by Allen Clark. We think that *every* town and country pastor could well use this service.

A crisis of major magnitude in respect to the Cuban refugees deserves our immediate attention. Here is an opportunity for rural communities to obtain the services of qualified professionals and at the same time practice our Christianity.

Nearly everyone knows of Ben Cain and of his fruitful ministry, but perhaps all of us will know him better as we read about him and follow his clearly defined sermon on "Stepping Up Production."

The Regional Convocations on the church in town and country will meet at Bangor, Maine, September 26-28, and Palestine, Texas, October 17-19. The theme "Power and Strategy for the Mission" is based on the insights obtained at Louisville in 1959 on the "Mission of the Church" and at Denver in 1960 on "Planning for Mission." This year the resources for motivation will be explored. Incidently, as preparation for this year's convocation a reading of the booklet "Planning for Mission" would be in order. It can be secured for $1.50 from the Department of Town and Country Church. ■ ■

Contributors of articles to TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH speak for themselves and not for the National Council of Churches or sponsoring organizations.

© National Council of Churches

TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH is published bi-monthly for the Department of Town and Country Church, Division of Home Missions, the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., by the Office of Publication and Distribution. 35¢ a copy; $2.00 a year. Publication and editorial offices: The Town and Country Church, NCC, 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, N. Y. Entered as second class matter at the Post Office at New York, New York, under the Act of March 3, 1879. Second class postage paid at New York, New York.

Poems for Spiritual Refreshment

by

Harold A. Schulz

REFUGE

While cornfields now lie waste of ripened fruit
And every stalk is eased of burdens borne
Throughout the summer's heat, destitute
Of care and mothering, they stand forlorn
Except for grey-white clouds of flapping wings
Descending on an empty flying field
To rest while on their southern journeyings
And glean the latter portion of the yield.
Their hunger staved, again they take their flight
Into the autumn skies without the fear
Of hidden hunter's guns—by chance they might
Return into this calm retreat next year
Finding their sanctuary here a place
To bask upon the glow of autumn's face.

EVENING EVENT

Walking in the twilight glow
Amid birds winging nestward
Singing their postludes,
I find a peaceful satisfaction.
The village main street is relaxed,
Stretched out toward the setting sun
Yawning and tired like a shepherd dog
In front of the hearth.
Breezes stir up silently
And mix the day-warm air
With evening's comforting hand
That brings the calm of night.

Rest re-creates my body, sight and soul,
And my heart deep in meditation
Knows the Greater Presence
Is within me.

BECOMING

Seeing a brilliant cardinal, I still
Experience within my soul a thrill;
Hearing the songs of happiness they tell
Is challenge to my heart to do as well.
Looking up into the sun-blue sky
The spirit of my being lifts as high.
Observing what God did to the oak tree
I realize what He expects of me.

HOME DEDICATION*

Dear Lord, we dedicate to Thee
This home, knowing that it will be
Always upheld with timbers strong
And graced with love and life and song.

Lord, bless its roof, each room and wall,
The lamps and windows, too; let all
The doors through which we go each day
Reflect Thy Spirit's golden ray.

Lord, bless the altar with Thy Light,
And may its glow increase our sight
That we may know Thee as Thou art,
With all of mind and soul and heart.

Lord, bless this home, its every friend
And kin, and may we comprehend
Our dedicated bond with Thee,
O Present Guest, eternally.

---

* Copyright, by Harold A. Schulz, 1961. Printed on heavy stock and attractively framed for wall display in the home, this poem is available at Eden Publishing House for $2.25.

GOOD ARCHITECTURE *NEEDED*

by William S. Clark

• Good architecture for the small rural church seems to be difficult to secure these days. During a recent trip through the rural areas of New England, the South and the Mid-West, I saw several hundred new churches of many denominations either recently constructed or under construction. I observed, with some disappointment, that almost all of these churches *lacked architectural vitality*. Apparently, the congregations and their pastors were quite satisfied with simply erecting walls and placing a roof over their heads. It was obvious that the buildings, for the most part, had little relation to program considerations, that their form was nondescript, that cheap and unsatisfactory materials were being used, and that they were linked to the past with a chain of considerable confinement. In their shapes, it seemed that these buildings provided places where people could retreat from the world and seek refuge in the past rather than being places of the present and the future where the Eternal One can always be met.

Whose Fault?

Why is it that so many of America's new rural churches lack good architecture? It is certainly not the fault of the architects. Any architect worth his salt will accept a commission for a small church as readily as he will a large one. I have talked with a number of architects in our country who have stated their desire to design a small church. It would be a real challenge to them. The fact is that our architects are not being asked to design small rural churches. They are not being given the opportunity to show that adequate designing for the small church can be accomplished within a limited budget.

Unfortunately, there are too many church members and their pastors who look upon architecture as an unnecessary luxury. Actually, the opposite is true. When only limited funds are available and it is imperative that every penny be stretched to its utmost purchasing capacity, it is indeed a luxury not to have an expert on architecture to see that the congregation gets all it is paying for in design, materials, and labor.

The Need to Understand

But small churches will not call upon an architect until they are first convinced of the legitimacy of the use of architecture in the service of the church. To be convinced, they must understand. To understand, they must open their minds and lift their sights to new meanings, new concepts, new forms, and new symbols. They must not be like the minister who once complained to me that all modern churches were "monstrosities." The farmer accepts the services of science and invention for his plowing, seeding, fertilizing, and harvesting. The rural minister uses a modern automobile to visit his church membership and to travel to town. Rural housewives have electric stoves, mixers, and freezers. Yet these same people repair to a building, for worship services and church programs, which would, in its architecture, correspond to a horse-drawn plow, a buggy, or an old-fashioned ice box.

If religion is to be vital and meaningful in the America of today and tomorrow, the church must not reject the services of the arts and sciences. It must recognize the best that these disciplines have to offer, extract it, adopt it, and then mold it to the church's great end. Speaking of architecture, particularly, congregations must be masters of that which is good and not slaves to that which is poor.

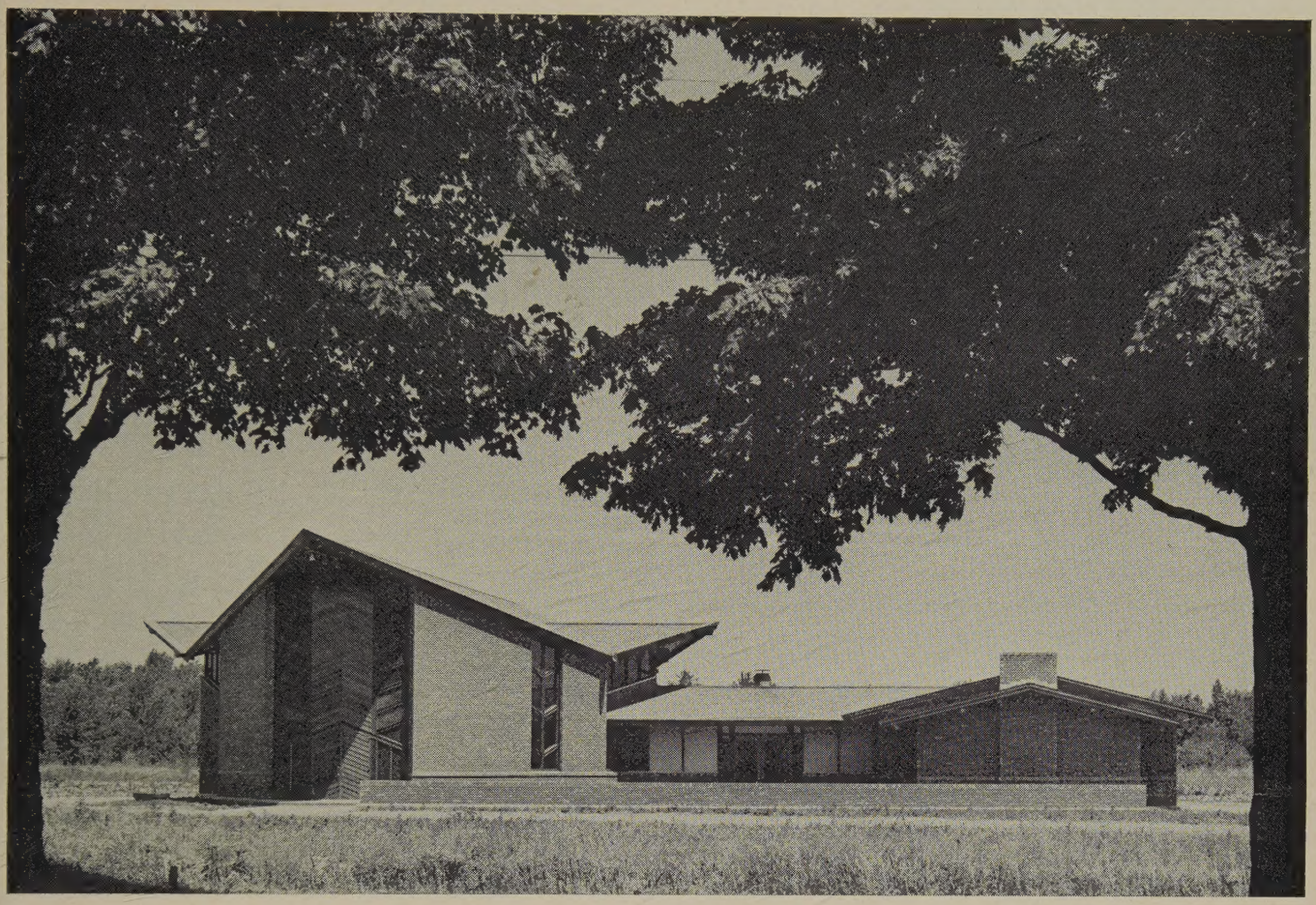
Expression for Conservatism

I suspect that there is an economic and sociological reason associated with the rural American approach to religion which gives rise to a theological conservatism. That which does not seem to be fully realized, however, is that conservatism, too, can be meaningfully and adequately expressed in terms of modern architecture. Modern forms and materials are not possessed solely by religious liberalism, nor do they, by their nature, express only "modern" religion. The fact is, some of the finest ecclesiastical architecture in America today has been created by an architect working with a conservative congregation and pastor.

Rural America needs to explore the tremendous possibilities offered by the spirit and approach of modern architecture. They must not close their minds to this channel of opportunity. If the religion of rural America, as such, is to be preserved in the form and expression of its buildings, this can best be done by delineating its character in true dramatic forms. A congregation's building is one manifestation of its dialogue with God. If the dialogue is to be dramatic, as all dialogue must be if it is to be meaningful, it must reflect character. It should move other people to thought and action, and it should be honest to its background and environment. Finally, it must use the language of its time and be logical in its presentation. If true dialogue is thus obtained, then the building will speak forcefully and intelligently, not only to its own creating congregation, but to others who are thoughtful and serious about their religion. It will stand as an adequate and vital witness to the sustaining power and majestic strength of the Word. ■ ■

Mr. Clark is the editor of *Your Church*. His article is reprinted, by kind permission, from the January-February-March, 1961, issue of *Your Church*, Jenkintown, Pa.

Creative Sharing and Building



• *The Shenendehowa Methodist Church of Elnora, New York, is an example of successfully uniting small, contiguous churches. Four rural churches of the Troy District in the Troy Conference struggled along without a resident pastor. Two were out-appointments of city churches and two were served by a retired minister. No building was adequate and the program was insufficient, with minimum budgets.*

With the coming of a new million-dollar consolidated school, the district superintendent surveyed the need for uniting the churches: Clifton Park, Newtown, Crescent, and West Crescent.

The Church's Division of National Missions gave guidance in surveying, planning, and financing. Strategy was determined and meetings held, resulting in the purchase by the Conference of a new five-acre site directly across from the new central school. The four churches formally merged, and a minister was appointed. From that point progress moved at an accelerated pace.

A parsonage was purchased and paid for within eighty-nine days. In May, 1958, ground was broken for the new church and in March, 1959, the first service was held. From June, 1957, when the merger took place, a total of $157,043.92 was raised and expended, with all but $15,000 coming from the united congregation.

The total budgets of the four churches, before merger, were less than $4,000. The 1960 budget is $16,500. World Service budget increased from $547 to $1,160.

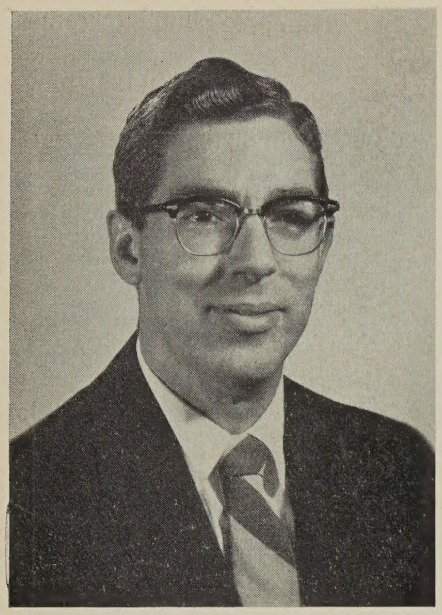
The total membership before merger was 367, many of whom were inactive. In the first twenty-four months of the new venture, 113 members were received on profession of faith, and 77 by transfer. Present membership is 500. The Woman's Society of Christian Service has a membership of 160 and a budget of $5,000. The youth work has been most successful, with an average Sunday evening attendance of more than fifty. Church school enrollment has more than doubled. Average church attendance is 256.

The minister, the Reverend Harry C. Mikels, who was appointed to the merged churches, reports that all commissions are functioning, and the total program of the church is alive. He adds: "Everyone is agreed that this is the most outstanding and most worth-while thing that has ever been done in this area of the country." —Methodist Missions Report

A Case of Suicide

by

Dan Schores



Daniel M. Schores

Mr. Schores is executive secretary, Town and Country Commission, Missouri Area, The Methodist Church. Active in town and country work for many years, he has given particular attention to what constitutes an adequate rural church ministry and program.

• I know of a case of suicide. It was a tragic affair. A family of neglected children were left. Noble purposes in life had been planned for the victim by its Father.

The suicide victim was a rural church. God called it to serve others, but it was concerned about self. People in the neighborhood—children of God—needed its witness, but the church did not care. The pastor challenged the few remaining members, however they did not want to grow or change. "Those people won't be interested in our little church" was their reply. The church forgot that it should be interested in "those people."

Denominational officials called on the church to share with others. "We have enough to do just taking care of our own needs." So apportionments were cut; voluntary offerings not taken; program not followed; evangelism neglected. And the church died. It took its own life. Why?

Emile Durkheim in his famous study of suicide says, "Life is said to be intolerable unless some reason for existing is involved, some purpose justifying life's trials. The individual alone is not a sufficient end for his activity."

Through failure to be concerned about the salvation of others, the church committed suicide. It had lost its purpose. Maybe it was not such a great loss after all. A church not concerned about others may not be worth saving itself. But the tragedy of neglected service remains. ■ ■

A JUDGMENT FROM GOD? by Albert Atteberry

• The town and country church is facing change today. Change can mean progress and advancement if we will choose the best and discard that which is no longer an effective Christian witness. Young men are not being called, or are not hearing the call, or are not heeding the call of God to the Christian ministry in our time. Many men after preparing for the ministry are leaving it for teaching or some other profession.

Is the attitude of the people of many of our small churches responsible for this? I see the hand of God in this. The shortage of ministers will close many small churches and cause the consolidation of many others. As Christian people accept this, a more effective Christian witness will be given. A minister can do a more effective work with 350 people in one church than in four churches only a few miles apart.

In the temporal economy, many small units are being replaced by a few larger ones (schools, farms, stores).

We need to realize that Christians down the road believe in the same Christ that we do, and that the cause of Christ will be advanced as we become one in him. We need dedicated Christian ministers, but we also need dedicated Christian people to work together for the advancement of the cause of Christ and the church.

History shows us that people have retarded progress when they have tried to hold on to the old because it was familiar, instead of accepting something new and more effective.

One hundred years ago small churches and small congregations were a necessity. In most of the country this is not so today. People can travel longer distances more quickly now, and do, for most other activities outside the church.

Dr. Richard Meyers, of Chicago, says that the size of the building and the program determines the maximum size of a church. For instance, most Sunday schools with ten classes will average about a hundred in attendance, and those with fifteen classes will average about 150 (each class averaging about ten).

Many churches have been the same size, with slight variations, for many years. Some of these are not giving an effective Christian witness because they are not large enough to serve their community.

Maybe God is using a shortage of ministers to bring about a change for the better. ■ ■

Mr. Atteberry is the pastor of the Evangelical United Brethren Church of Colusa, Illinois.

Religion and Safety Materials Available

Religion and safety materials, ranging from "A Prayer for Motorists" by Pope John XXIII to a farm safety sermon, are available in single, free copies by writing the Director of Religious Activities, National Safety Council, 425 No. Michigan Ave., Chicago 11, Illinois.

Look over the list below and check the material you think will best suit your needs. **Send your orders to the National Safety Council.**

ACCIDENT FACTS:

- ☐ Accident Facts 1960
- ☐ Drinking and Driving Fact Sheets

CHURCH SAFETY:

- ☐ Church Fire Prevention and Protection
- ☐ Church Safety Check List
- ☐ How Safe Is Your Church?

TEEN-AGERS:

- ☐ Bad Driving Habits of Teen-age Drivers
- ☐ Driving Rules
- ☐ Handbook for Car Clubs
- ☐ Traffic Quiz

SERMONS AND TALKS ON MORAL RESPONSIBILITY:

- ☐ Farm Safety Sermon
- ☐ Life—One of God's Most Precious Gifts
- ☐ Moral Code for Motorists
- ☐ Our Bloody Highways
- ☐ Safety and Morality
- ☐ Save One Life and You Save the World
- ☐ Toward a Theology of Driving

SAFETY PRAYERS:

- ☐ One for the Road . . . A Prayer
- ☐ Pope John's Prayer for Motorists
- ☐ Safety Prayers (from several faiths)
- ☐ Scriptural References to Safety
- ☐ Sherburne Prescott Prayer

MORAL EMPHASIS PROGRAMS:

- ☐ Moral Emphasis Program
- ☐ How to Organize a Moral Emphasis Program

BOOKLETS:

- ☐ Seat Belts Save Lives
- ☐ Christians Should Drive Like Christians
- ☐ Careless Driving . . . Are You Guilty?
- ☐ Know—Obey Your Signs of Life
- ☐ The Morality of Traffic Safety
- ☐ Rules for Safety
- ☐ Stop Driving Us Crazy—film brochure
- ☐ How to Prevent Your Own Murder

MISCELLANEOUS:

- ☐ Your Religion Makes You a Better (or Worse) Driver
- ☐ List of National Committee of Religious Leaders for Safety
- ☐ Proposed outline of purposes, composition, representation and duties for a state or local religious committee.
- ☐ What Is the National Safety Council?
- ☐ Leaflet on booklet "He Rides Beside You" giving information on booklet plus order blank.
- ☐ Driver education materials; statement, article on legislation and driver education contributions.
- ☐ Obedience (child safety)
- ☐ Survey of Religious Safety Activities
- ☐ Senior Citizen in Traffic
- ☐ Youth Traffic Safety Ideas
- ☐ "Everyone Learn to Swim" Fact Sheet

Resolution Regarding Agricultural Migratory Workers

Adopted by the General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., December 8, 1960, at San Francisco, California

• The fifth General Assembly of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., meeting in San Francisco, California, in December, 1960, expresses its deep concern for the wages, living and working conditions of the nation's seasonal migratory agricultural workers.

The Assembly congratulates and commends its Department of Migrant Ministry upon the completion of forty years of service to the social, educational, health, and religious needs of agricultural migrants. We urge the churches to continue and enlarge their support of this ministry. We rejoice at evidences of growing general concern for improving the conditions under which these agricultural migrants live.

Repeated studies by impartial bodies, governmental and private, have revealed the facts about these conditions—low wages, intermittent employment, handicaps and disabilities in regard to health, education and welfare services which make these people one of the most disadvantaged groups in our affluent society.

We note with approval the creation of a permanent President's Committee on Migratory Labor in the federal government. We encourage more vigorous efforts in behalf of federal and state legislation to extend the federal minimum wage, to improve housing facilities, health, education and welfare services, and transportation safeguards for migratory farm workers.

We urge the continuation of current efforts at responsible and democratic labor organization among these workers. We favor extending to them by law the right of collective bargaining and access to the services of the National Labor Relations Board on a par with other wage workers in industry. We call upon employers of Christian conscience to encourage and stand with these workers in their efforts to gain human dignity, self-respect, and economic security through the well-tested device of union organization. ■ ■

The Population Dividing Line

• Statistical specialists, sociologists, the United States Department of Agriculture, research leaders, and others, place the dividing line at 50,000 population between metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas. Recent changes involving the interdependence of people in larger communities should lead the church to consider changing the dividing line of 10,000 population between town-country and urban churches to the larger figure of 50,000 population.—*The Methodist Division of National Missions' Annual Report*

Difficulties in Aiding Starving Chinese

• An increasing concern among church people over reports that millions in mainland China are starving is shown in letters received by Church World Service, the relief agency of the National Council of Churches. At the request of its board of managers, Dr. Earle H. Ballou, CWS acting director of overseas program, has prepared a report explaining the situation.

"In answer to the many uncomfortable letters asking why something isn't being done," he said, "we have to say simply that, as things are, there is nothing we can do."

It is natural that with our overabundance of food, many feel that Americans should take the lead in sending U.S. surpluses to Red China.

"However," Dr. Ballou explained, "not only do the laws of this country make it illegal to send food or anything else to China, but the Chinese Government does not want outside aid and will not accept it." He added that it would not be impossible to change our laws but that "the United States would probably be the last country from which help would be accepted."

Dr. Ballou cited a report that offers of help from the International Red Cross have been consistently turned down by the Peiping Government.

Records also show, he said, that while the Chinese are purchasing "enormous quantities" of wheat and flour from Australia and Canada, trainloads of foodstuffs continue to arrive from China in the British colony of Hong Kong, which is dependent on mainland China for most of its food. Some of these shipments, he said, are carried to other parts of Southeast Asia and sold, and some foodstuffs find their way back in thirty-pound parcels which the Communist Chamber of Commerce permits to be sent from Hong Kong to friends and relatives.—*The Religious Newsweekly*

"O Lord, the cry of distress from these tragic multitudes pierces our hardened hearts."

Catholic—Protestant Cooperation

by Edward W. O'Rourke

• In recent years much has been written about Catholic-Protestant conflicts. Also the candidacy of a Roman Catholic for the presidency brought to light additional tensions and bigotries.

On the other hand, Pope John XXIII has repeatedly extended a hand of friendship and good will to persons of other faiths. Many Protestant leaders are sincerely striving for a reunification of Christendom.

We think it appropriate, therefore, to review the significant steps toward interfaith cooperation already accomplished in many areas of rural life.

Since the number of persons in rural communities is relatively limited, it would be tragic if each religious group were to isolate itself from neighbors of different faiths.

Precisely because the number of persons involved is limited, rural people have many face-to-face dealings with neighbors. This helps them understand and respect one another. Bigotry, fear, and suspicion grow when people know little about one another. As rural people live and work together, they learn that in some activities interfaith cooperation is possible and that in other activities it leads only to disorder and weakening of faith.

Leaders Show the Way

During the past four decades rural people in the United States have been blessed with religious leaders of uncommon wisdom, charity, and tolerance. These leaders have avoided compromise of doctrine and cooperation in public worship and have pursued cooperation in projects which advance the spiritual and temporal welfare of communities as a whole. Most of the pioneers in the Catholic rural life movement have been oustanding in this regard. Let us mention three of these pioneers.

Msgr. George J. Hildner of St. John's Church, Gildehaus, Missouri, resolved at the beginning of his rural pastorate to be all things to all men. He worked with Protestant and Catholic farmers to promote soil conservation, to build levees on the Mississippi River and to organize marketing cooperatives. In 1953, the Governor of Missouri gave him the title "Master Conservationist."

The Rev. George M. Nell has been pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Island Grove, Illinois, for thirty-eight years. *Reader's Digest* (December 23, 1933) stated that Father Nell had preached "a gospel in which Jew and Gentile, caste and outcaste, may join. . . . When the Ku Klux Klan tried to organize Central Illinois, they failed completely within twenty miles of Father Nell's parish. No matter how the organizers denounced the Catholic priest, the people thought of Father Nell and knew better." On October 21, 1956, the National Catholic Rural Life Conference presented to Father Nell a distinguished service award. Among his accomplishments mentioned in the citation was the Campaign for Christ in Jasper County, described as "a pattern of real cooperation among religious groups serving the countryside."

Msgr. L. G. Ligutti is the director for international affairs of the NCRLC; in the past he has held the offices of president, executive secretary, and executive director in the Conference. He is known and respected by rural people of all faiths throughout the world. He has helped organize or promote the growth of most of the projects in which Catholic and Protestant farmers work together. These projects include the American Country Life Association, the Christian Rural Overseas Program, the Religion in Rural Life Committee and Short Courses for Rural Pastors. In his present position as Observer of the Holy See to F.A.O. he has extensive contacts with rural leaders of all nationalities and creeds.

Many Protestant rural leaders have been most cordial in their attitudes toward Roman Catholics. Dr. Raymond Miller is a past president of the American Institute of Cooperation and was a member of the USDA staff for many years. Although he is a Protestant, he served long and faithfully on the Board of Directors of the NCRLC. His pamphlet, *A Protestant Answers the Question "What Is the National Catholic Rural Life Conference?"* has been widely read by rural leaders throughout the United States.

In recent months Catholic rural leaders have published a booklet promoting a new magazine which is called *Country Beautiful.* This booklet includes highly commendatory statements by non-Catholic publishers and rural leaders such as Mr. Wheeler McMillen, vice president of the Farm Journal, and Rev. Dr. Henry S. Randolph, former secretary of the Town and Country Department of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and representing the Town and Country Church Department of the National Council of Churches.

The following are other projects in which Catholics and Protestants have cooperated: rural school reorganization, soil conservation, and various overseas relief projects.

Our Policy

We Catholic farmers and our leaders do not intend to compromise on any issue involving faith or morals. We do not intend to join with persons of other faiths in official acts of worship. On the other hand, we intend to continue to work with God-fearing members of other faiths in projects which affect the spiritual and temporal welfare of the community as a whole. We consider them esteemed allies in our struggle against materialism, apathy, ignorance, and sin.

We are convinced that in these crucial times all men of good will must work together. We are proud of the record of rural people and their leaders in this regard. We hold up that record to the future leaders in both rural and urban communities—a record to be admired, imitated and improved upon. ■ ■

The Rev. Mr. O'Rourke is executive director of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference.

THE LOVE OF GOD — BY MAIL

by

Allen W. Clark

• Every minister seeks effective answers to unsolved puzzles in pastoral care. "Home Prayers" has proved, over thirty-four years, to be one of the most effective of these answers.

A Unique Ministry

"Home Prayers" is a one-page worship service, attractively printed —opening prayer, Bible reading, five-hundred-word sermon, and closing prayers. The sermons are down-to-earth New Testament Christianity, without denominational slant.

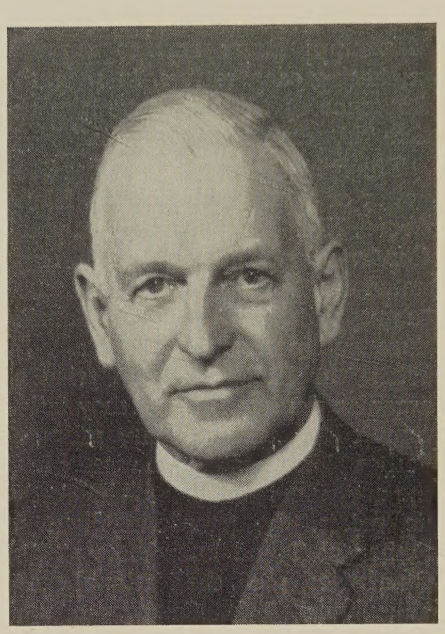
The unique feature of "Home Prayers" is that the printed service closes, like a letter, with "faithfully, your friend," and leaves space for the written signature of the minister. The lonely shut-in, or the far-away sailor, sees the familiar signature and knows that his minister remembers him every week in the year.

From time to time, the real pastor writes a brief personal postscript at the bottom of the page—a bit of news, inquiring after the parishioner's health. . . . This genuinely personal touch enables "Home Prayers" to do something a printed leaflet or devotional pamphlet cannot do—express a warm, individual caring for the isolated man or woman.

The Neediest Group

After all, this isolated group is probably the "neediest" in most parishes, town and country. They are cut off from the visible fellowship of the church by sickness, old age, Sunday employment, remote residence on lonely backroads, absence from home in the armed services or in college. They are also deprived of living contact with their minister. As a result, many of them begin to feel neglected and forgotten. They even feel cut off from the love of God.

A concerned parson seeks some way for a steady ministry to these people. Yet, no matter how hard he tries, he cannot find time for the monthly call he intended on the elderly shut-ins, many of whom have been the most faithful church members; or the chronically ill, who are specially liable to deteriorating self-pity. Nor does he find the time to maintain any steady contact by mail with those away in the armed services or in college.



The Rev. Mr. Clark is the editor of "Home Prayers."

Mailing the parish leaflet, or some devotional pamphlet, to them is a gesture that is usually appreciated; but there is no warmth, no personal encounter, through a printed communication. The true pastor has a sharp sense of frustration over this deeply human, unmet need.

Originated in a Parish

One reason why parish ministers, in both town and country, turn to "Home Prayers" is that they know it originated in a parish situation.

A young minister (the Rev. Allen W. Clark, who became editor of "Home Prayers") ministered, on Sunday afternoons, to the people of a small chapel, back in the hills. In summer these people attended in good numbers, but in the severe winter weather, only a handful could get to the church. The young minister discovered that the big mail-order houses had taught people to shop by mail. Why couldn't he teach people to go to church by mail?

Soon he was able to report forty or fifty people worshipping in a dozen or fifteen homes each Sunday—instead of the half-dozen who had struggled out to the chapel. This was in 1927. Today "Home Prayers" is printed, and has a circulation of nearly 19,000 copies a week, in all fifty states of the Union. Some eight hundred churches, and a number of hospitals, use this weekly worship service. In 1958, the editor, Allen W. Clark, found it necessary to leave the parish ministry to give his full time to "Home Prayers."

So Much Done—In So Little Time

What appeals to the heavily-loaded parson is that he can do so much for so many people, in so little time, through "Home Prayers."

Suppose he has twenty-five people who are cut off from church services. His secretary, or a volunteer worker, addresses the envelopes, and puts them, with next Sunday's "Home Prayers," on the parson's desk on Tuesday morning. It takes him only two or three minutes to sign the twenty-five services. His six or seven brief postscripts may take him seven or eight minutes. Slipping the right envelope over the right sheet, he leaves the sheets to be folded, inserted, and mailed.

Thus, in ten or twelve minutes, he has effectively channeled the love of

God to these twenty-five people. Even those who receive that week's "Home Prayers" in an unsealed envelope, without any postscript, remember that he wrote a postscript to them recently, and hope that he will write another soon. The fact that he does often send this by first-class mail lifts this ministry-by-mail out of the nondescript flood of unsealed mail which usually finds its way to the scrap-basket.

This all seems very simple, and it is. But it *works!* For people no longer feel that God, and their minister, have forgotten them. They feel included again. After reading one of the personal postscripts, they may later tell their minister, "I almost felt as if you had called on me." Occasionally, in his postscript, he may ask them a question, and enclose an addressed, return-postal for their convenient reply. So "Home Prayers" comes close to being a conversation between pastor and parishioner; and a deep need is met.

"In Hell"

A young man went off in the armed services, after growing up in the parish he loved and served. He had attended the church school, belonged to its Boy Scout troop, served in many other capacities, and was teaching a church school class just before he left. The church meant a lot to him.

He was assigned to a remote place on the other side of the world, where mail from home was more precious than money found in the street. Yet, in the two long years he was there, not one word came to him from his minister or his friends at the church. The first Sunday after he came home, he went to church (with mixed feelings). An usher recognized him and cheerily called out, "Where have *you* been?", as if he had been neglecting his church-going. The youngster hesitated, and then replied, dryly, "In Hell!", and went on into church, not feeling entirely at home.

At least one reason why the youngster had not heard from his church was that his church did not know of any simple, practical way of keeping in steady touch with him—such as "Home Prayers." Many ministers use them, and report that servicemen are often more appreciative, even, than shut-ins.

They Cost Very Little

The cost of "Home Prayers," to a parish, is surprisingly small. Twice a year "the plate is passed" by mail, to the parishes, inviting them to make a contribution, on the basis of a cost of three cents a copy. This is approximately the cost of publishing and distribution.

"Home Prayers" has always been able to pay its bills. It has no endowment, no financial angel, and nearly 90 per cent of its budget of $14,000 a year comes in these voluntary gifts.

The cost for local postage in sending out twenty-five copies (with a few sealed, each week) would come to about ninety cents a week, or $23.40 for six months.

Many churches include "Home Prayers" as one item in their annual budget. In others, a minister draws on his discretionary fund, or the deacons provide the money out of their special charitable funds. Often a parish organization, such as the women's group or the Sunday school will provide the money to finance "Home Prayers" in their churches.

A Break-Through in Shut-In Work

The most original and redeeming use of "Home Prayers" to date has been by the Rev. Margaret Henrichsen, of Maine. She is the author of *Seven Steeples*—the rugged pastor who holds services in all the six churches of the North Sullivan Circuit, forty-eight Sundays a year!

Like other deeply concerned pastors, she had bewailed the fact that all we try to do for shut-ins seems to leave them still imprisoned by their four walls, the minute we leave. She gave sustained thought and prayer to this vexing problem, and to the possibility of breaking the fetters of a shut-in's self-centeredness.

Out of her concern came an adventure. She offered, to each of her twenty-five shut-ins, an extra, unsigned copy of "Home Prayers," in addition to the one she signed and postscripted to each of them. This extra copy they could sign, and send to someone else travelling a rough road, to help them with God's encouragement. Most of them accepted this offer to minister. At the end of a full year, half of them were still reaching out to someone else through this ministry. Now, after two whole years, six are still rejoicing in this new freedom of caring for others—four of them are sending out two copies each, every week, and two are sending one.

This is a real "break-through" in the pastoral care of shut-ins, for it smashes their high walls of self-pity and morbid self-concern, and they find a new joy in forgetting their own aches and pains in their growing compassion for the suffering of others. Mrs. Henrichsen, by the way, is one of the trustees of "Home Prayers."

The Board of Trustees

The trustees of "Home Prayers" are an able, interesting group. In 1958, "Home Prayers" was incorporated as a non-profit charity in the state of New Hampshire. The chairman is the Rev. Hilda L. Ives, originator of the "Larger Parish," and outstanding in her vigor of ecumenical eagerness. The vice chairman is the Rt. Rev. W. Appleton Lawrence, noted for his broad, outreaching Christian horizons, retired Episcopal bishop of Western Massachusetts. Richard C. B. Clark, a banker, with the Merchants National Bank in Boston, Massachusetts, is treasurer. Assistant treasurer is the Rev. Philip Humason Steinmetz, widely known for his memorable ministry to the Ashfield (Massachusetts) churches, serving a Congregational and an Episcopal church simultaneously for more than a decade. He is now on the staff of the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

Benjamin F. Andrew is executive of the New England Town and Country Church Commission, which is doing valuable research work in the town and country field. The Rev. David W. Emmons is currently pastor of the First Congregational Church in Rowley, Massachusetts, and, in the autumn, goes to Brantford, Ontario, Canada, to be co-director of the Hidden Springs Center, the Christian rehabilitation cen-

ter which is becoming known for its success in re-building people. The Rev. William G. Vigne, of Delmar, New York, began his ministry in a Vermont rural church, and is now associate minister of the First Methodist Church in this suburb of Albany.

Intriguing Variety of Uses

In addition to serving shut-ins and servicemen, "Home Prayers" has a most intriguing variety of uses, limited only by the imaginations of the pastors using this instrument.

A minister will send a copy each week to a layman in the Navy who has been appointed acting chaplain of a vessel too small to carry an ordained chaplain. This layman, unused to fashioning worship services and sermons, uses "Home Prayers" as the basis for his service and finds the messages most acceptable to the men. At the present moment, a chief petty officer in the Coast Guard is so using "Home Prayers" in the Antarctic.

In the wide-open spaces of the West and the Southwest, state-wide religious groups often conduct a Sunday-School-by-mail for those families who live too far from a church to attend its services. Often "Home Prayers" is enclosed with the Sunday school material—which gives the family a worship service to have together, when Sunday school in the home is over.

Boy Scout troop leaders, on a weekend hike, take along a copy of "Home Prayers" and use this as the Sunday service for the boys. Women's groups and prayer circles often utilize this material for their devotional period. Some ministers, requested to make a devotional radio broadcast, use "Home Prayers," which can be tailored to provide anything between nine and fifteen minutes. A considerable number of preachers count on "Home Prayers" for sermon material, and are gracious enough to write in, expressing their gratitude.

Since "Home Prayers" is not copyrighted, there is no limitation to its use—the more widely it is used, the happier the editor is! It is greatly appreciated when people do write, describing what use they have made of this ministry-by-mail, for it gives the editor suggestions which can be passed on to others.

"Home Prayers" Is Easy to Order

A brief note is enough to put a church on the mailing list of "Home Prayers," for as many copies a week as are needed. Just write to the Rev. Allen W. Clark, c/o Betts, 44 Maple Street, Danvers, Mass., noting the number of copies wanted.

Actually, "Home Prayers" is printed four issues at a time. Any one sending in an order will, therefore, receive their supply for four Sundays in advance, within ten days. The number of copies can be changed, at any time, by writing to this same address, the business office of "Home Prayers." ■ ■

REGIONAL CONVOCATIONS

on the CHURCH IN TOWN & COUNTRY

Northeast (U.S. and Canada)
Hammond Street Congregational Church
Bangor, Maine
September 26-28, 1961

South Central
Lakeview Methodist Assembly
Palestine, Texas
October 17-19, 1961

"POWER AND STRATEGY FOR THE MISSION"

Sponsored by the Department of Town and Country Church, Division of Home Missions, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., 475 Riverside Drive, New York 27, New York—in cooperation with Bangor Theological Seminary, Dr. Frederick Whittaker, president; the Maine Council of Churches, Miss Marion Ulmer, executive secretary; and the Texas Council of Churches, Mr. Harold Kilpatrick, executive secretary.

Both Convocations will begin at 1:00 p.m. the first day and close 12:00 noon the third day.

It is suggested that denominational meetings occur the day and/or morning before the opening of the Convocation.

A Responsibility on Our Doorstep

THE CUBAN REFUGEE CRISIS

by

Elsa Kruuse

• You get the story in bits and pieces. The nervous man in stiff, new dungarees keeps his head down, embarrassed, as he describes his fashionable law office in Havana to which for more than a year no client had dared come and whose case would never have been heard anyway.

There was nothing else to do but leave Cuba and somehow get his family—all five of them—to Florida. When the chance came, they had to board the plane at the last minute without even a suitcase. Five U.S. dollars—all he was allowed to take out—had gone for their first meal in Miami. After that came the handouts—some used clothing, the new dungarees donated by a local store, and the daily meal tickets.

Sitting on the corner of an unmade Army cot, he can smile just the same. "It's embarrassing to accept help, but at least we're free now, *libre!*"

Doctors, dentists, judges, professors—their registration cards at the Miami Refugee Center are a roster of Cuba's professional and intellectual elite. Until they learn English and qualify to practice in this country, they can get jobs as janitors—as one judge has succeeded in doing—or dishwashers, if they are lucky.

Disillusioned, bitter veterans of the fight to get Batista out and Castro in shuffle patiently alongside them in the line at the job placement desk. And the line at the Center daily gets longer.

More than 20,000 Cuban refugees are registered in the Miami area and an unknown number, living with friends and relatives, are not registered. Additional refugees arrive every day.

"The only solution is to move these people to other places in this country where they can make a living," says a spokesman for the new Protestant Latin American Emergency Committee in Miami.

Because of its long experience in resettling refugees and displaced persons in this country, Church World Service was called in to process those who want to or who can be persuaded to leave. All that is needed—and it sounds easy—is to locate churches and church families in the other forty-nine states willing to sponsor a Cuban and his family and so channel off the pressure from a city where there has been no more room for a long time.

Working with the CWS people on the Committee are other trained workers from the Division of Home Missions of the National Council of Churches, its member denominations, and the Greater Miami Council of Churches, who make the city's Refugee Center their headquarters.

For Americans, this situation is a unique experience, too. It is the first time since 1942 that the United States has been a "country of asylum."

"We are not dealing here with a group of exiles whom we may regard and assist at arm's length," the director of Protestant aid to the Cubans explains. "These people have landed on our doorstep and are our responsibility."

Director is the Rev. Dr. Russell Stevenson, appointed by the Board of National Missions of his church (United Presbyterian, U.S.A.) to head up the Protestant cooperative program of aid to the Cubans in Florida.

The federal government has allocated $4,000,000 to the program and made the Department of Health, Education and Welfare responsible for essential health services, the care of unaccompanied children, measures to assist the more highly skilled among the refugees, and a surplus food program beginning in April.

Basic needs of the refugees are being met, as far as possible, by the voluntary agencies, including the National Catholic Welfare Conference, the Florida State Welfare Board, Dade County agencies, and the community.

What was expected to be a short-term emergency program to aid refugees from Cuba is developing into a "long, hard job," says a report from Miami, Florida. "New" refugees are thronging into the Cuban Refugee Center, where the Protestant Latin American Emergency Committee is at work, as each plane from Havana arrives "loaded to the wings."

For the thousands who fled to Florida last winter, says the report from Dr. Stevenson, all hope of returning to a "free" Cuba, which bolstered them so long, has now disappeared. "The abortive invasion attempt and Castro's show of strength have taken care of that."

The "alarming" rate of new arrivals, says this report, has resulted in mushrooming requests for food, clothing, and medical supplies from the eleven Protestant centers operating in the city. In one month, 6,000 people received some counsel and material assistance. A new project noted in the report is a series of cooking classes at the YWCA, initi-

(*Continued on page* 14)

Mrs. Kruuse is editor of the Office of Information of the National Council of Churches.

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE PROVIDES AID FOR CUBAN REFUGEES

Shown above are Dr. John Haldeman, chairman, and Russell Stevenson, resident director, of the Protestant Latin American Emergency Committee, examining a special shipment of 17,000 pounds of clothing which was shipped to Miami from the Church World Service collection center in New Windsor, Maryland.

In addition to the clothing, the Brethren Service Commission contributed 3,000 pounds of food. These supplies were distributed to the most urgent cases through the facilities of the various collaborating churches in Miami.

(*Continued from page* 13)

ated by the Miami Council of United Church Women. Unused to our foods, Cuban women are now learning to make tasty dishes from U.S. surplus dried milk and eggs, beans, peanut butter, and lard.

Stating that new cases are being registered at the center at the rate of 115 to 125 a day, the report notes that the emphasis now is on resettlement in other U.S. areas. Close to three hundred have now been resettled by Church World Service and cooperating denominations.

Many hundreds have found in Miami's churches a place for counsel, a sympathetic hearing of their problems and, often, rent money when they faced eviction. Many have also been brought into the life and worship of local congregations.

To help continue the Protestant ministry to these people, the National Council's Division of Home Missions has launched a drive for $15,000 from member-church groups in the nation for a six-month plan of aid, rehabilitation, and resettlement.

"This is an emergency which cannot wait," Dr. Theodore E. Matson declared when the Division, of which he is chairman, voted to establish the fund.

The Christian imperative to help all those in need is going forward in Miami with urgency, good will, and hard work, says another report.

There are schools in the nation calling for Spanish teachers; hospitals which need more doctors desperately; dentists who need Spanish-speaking assistants; and law offices, businesses, local agencies, and churches in our large cities where Spanish-speaking personnel have become a necessity.

As one social worker at the Center sees it, because this country has grown strong through the contributions of all its "newcomers," Americans in every state should "reach out and welcome these Cuban citizens waiting on our doorstep."

Churches and individuals willing to "reach out" should contact the Protestant Latin American Emergency Committee at 223 N.W. Third Avenue, Miami, Florida, immediately. ■ ■

Notes for a Labor Day Sermon

Stepping Up Production

by Benjamin H. Cain

"Every one helps his neighbor,
and says to his brother, 'Take courage!'
The craftsman encourages the goldsmith,
and he who smooths with the hammer him who strikes the anvil,
saying of the soldering, 'It is good' . . ."

—ISAIAH 41:6-7

I. Introduction

We learn from outsiders. This is a factory scene. The working force is small, equipment crude, machinery poor; the spirit of the force is ideal and wonderful. The church resembles a factory somewhat; both have buildings, equipment, resources, a schedule of operation, and both place products on a world market. Four views of this scene are taken:

II. Purposeful Activity

A. Everyone is at work.

The purpose is to fortify themselves against the invader, Cyrus. The minority group is facing a great emergency. Every wheel, belt, pulley, and motor is humming. There are no clock watchers or loafers around.

B. The production program of the church.

Jesus said, "I will build my church" (Matt. 16:18). He is the general superintendent of this program. God has a purpose for his church. If we fail him or our generation, he will raise up a people through whom he can establish the kingdom.

C. To carry out this production program the church needs tools.

(Leadership, building, equipment, resources, an adequate working force, a challenging program, a spirit of cooperation, and a spiritual dynamic.)

III. Helpful Activity

"Everyone helps"

A. Neighborly concern for all workers.

"Everyone helps his neighbor."

1. Why are we not more neighborly?

There are divisive forces at work in our society that build hedges between groups—social, political, racial, religious hedges.

2. How can we be more neighborly?

By following the teachings of Jesus. Be a good Samaritan yourself. Hymn: "Help Somebody Today."

B. No hindrances in this factory.

No obstacles, snags, or monkey wrenches. They had the green light. Jesus was hindered by "unbelief"; Paul said, "Satan hindered us." Prayer, "Lord, thou canst work and none can hinder." The fact is God does not work when we hinder by our stinginess, indifference, and pessimism.

C. All are helpful.

Wholehearted teamwork—no waste of time, energy, talents, or resources. All for one and one for all. Illustration: The big trees of California grow in families: hence, they stand the storms because of united roots.

IV. Courageous Activity

"Everyone says to his brother, 'Take courage.' "

A. A brotherly concern.

William Penn made a treaty with the Indians. It was never officially recorded or broken. He established the city of Philadelphia (brotherly love). Our weakness, our needs, our calling, our task, our destiny all call for "brotherhood."

B. There are some discouraging things about the church today.

Some pastors are under the "juniper tree"; some are going into business. Some laymen are pessimistic. They exaggerate human weakness instead of magnifying God's power.

C. We must appeal to the hero in people, not the coward.

If the church is weak and cowardly, she will be pushed to the sidelines. We must "live like heroes"; get out of the bleachers and into the arena of life.

D. It is our duty and privilege to encourage our brethren.

All of us need encouragement sometimes. It costs nothing but helps a lot. There is a difference between honest praise and flattery. Jesus always changed sick men's outlook before healing them. "Be of good cheer."

V. Integrated Activity

(Not fragmentary, disunited, or hodgepodge.)

A. They brought all the parts together in one whole.

Each man had a different job but the same goal. The common goal of the church is to "build the body of Christ."

B. We differ in ages, background, tastes, and talents.

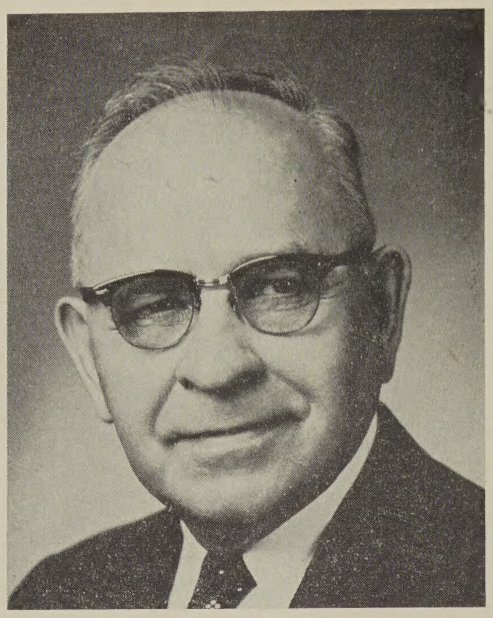
We come from all walks of life. ". . . You have come to fullness of life in him. . ." (Col. 2:10a).

VI. Conclusion

We step up production on the local level through our purpose, helpfulness, courage, and united action.

". . . You have come to fullness of life in him. . ."

so you may know . . .



BENJAMIN HARRISON CAIN

• Benjamin Harrison Cain was born near San Pierre, Indiana, before the turn of the century. He was reared on the farm. Ten years after he had completed the eighth grade, he experienced a definite call to the Christian ministry. He left the farm, completed high school, and graduated from Indiana Central College in Indianapolis, Indiana, in 1922. Two years later, he enrolled in the United Theological Seminary in Dayton and graduated in 1927.

He did post-graduate research work in Temple University in 1928 and 1929. He was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity by Indiana Central College in 1937.

Dr. Cain served both rural and urban churches for twenty years in the St. Joseph Conference of the former United Brethren in Christ Church in northern Indiana. He was elected to the office of conference superintendent in 1935 and served in that capacity for twelve years. This conference is 80 per cent rural. It was during this period that his book entitled *The Church Ministering to Rural Life* was published. It was circulated quite widely and used in a number of theological seminaries.

Because of success in reclaiming rural fields and consolidating small churches, the Division of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Evangelical United Brethren Church elected him to the newly-created office of secretary of the Department of the Town and Country Church on April 9, 1947. He served in this capacity until his retirement on May 31, 1961. He was a member of interdenominational boards and committees, and rendered invaluable service as a participant of the committee on management of Town and Country Church Department of the National Council of Churches.

While in this office he travelled extensively doing field work in thirty-four states. Three more books were written and published, including *The Town and Country Pulpit* which contains "Stepping Up Production." (See page 15.) He has a manuscript ready for publication entitled *Motivating the Small Church in Her Work in Evangelism* and has the approval of a book outline by the Warner Press entitled *The Chief Executive of the Parish.* For twelve years he was the editor of *Our Church in Town and Country,* which is now known as *Advance.* Of this he has been co-editor during the last two years. He has contributed numerous articles to denominational and interdenominational periodicals.

The Cains have two children: Joyce Eloise Moore who, with her husband and four children, has just completed one term as a linguistic missionary in Ecuador, South America; Jarvis Lynn Cain, a graduate of Purdue University in agriculture, who will receive his PH.D. degree in marketing at Ohio State University on June 9, 1961. There are five grandchildren in these two families.

Editor's Note: After June 1, 1961, Dr. and Mrs. Cain will be at home at 1120 East Main Street, Warsaw, Indiana. This city is located in a county of ninety-eight lakes. They urge that we call on them when anywhere near the great Hoosier state.

Certainly we all rejoice in that Dr. Cain can assume a most deserved, less-taxing load in Kingdom work, yet because of the ways in which his ministry has been so productive, he shall be sorely missed. Only God in his wisdom shall be able to raise up another like him.

IN FAVOR OF FAMILIES

• Mr. Don Grant, public relations counselor for a large construction company in California, tells of an experiment which has proven both practical and profitable. For many years the construction work done on large projects such as dams has been done by men living in camp barracks. The men often got into fights and were generally disorderly.

As such, they were considered a threat by the nearest local town. But now all this has changed through the elimination of the camp barracks in favor of normal family relationships in separate dwellings. Now these same men and their families are welcomed in the community.

Although the cost of separate houses is initially greater, the savings gained through higher morale, increased productivity, and improved public relations more than offsets the difference. Once again the value of family life is confirmed. ■ ■